

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 USIE-00 INRE-00 SAM-01

CIAE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01

PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 ACDA-05 SAI-01 AF-06 IO-10 OPR-02

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FM AMEMBASSY LISBON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 3402

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MADRID

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM

USMISSION NATO

DIA WASHDC

USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GER

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, PO

SUBJ: POLITICAL ROUNDUP: TENSIONS CONTINUE

SUMMARY: REVOLUTIONARY COUNCIL (RC), FOLLOWING ALL-NIGHT SESSION, HAS FORMALLY DISMISSED SOCIALIST MINISTERS FROM GOVERNMENT AND CALLED FOR THEIR REPLACEMENT WITH INDIVIDUALS WHO WILL "PLACE NATIONAL INTEREST ABOVE PARTY INTEREST." PRIME MINISTER VASCO GONCALVES HAS CANCELLED SCHEDULED TRIP TO SAO TOME INDEPENDENCE CEREMONIES TO REMAIN IN LISBON. COPCON UNITS IN LISBON AREA REMAIN ON LOW-LEVEL ALERT. SOCIALISTS CONTINUE TO PONDER NEXT MOVE FOLLOWING SOARES JULY 11 PRESS CONFERENCE. PPD ALSO CONTINUES TO MOVE DELIBERATELY. PPD HAS CONDITIONED ITS PARTICIPATION IN GOVERNMENT ON RESPONSE TO SERIES OF LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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"OBSERVATIONS" MADE BY PPD LEADER GUERREIRO DURING JULY 12 INTER-

VIEW WITH PRESIDENT. COMMUNISTS MEANWHILE PUSH UNITY LINE, WHILE ATTACKING PS. DEVELOPMENTS ELSEWHERE -- INTER-SINDICAL RALLY IN OPORTO; FIGHTING IN LUANDA, AND ESCAPE OF MRPP LEADER -- ADD TO TENSIONS. WE CONTINUE TO BELIEVE THAT ONLY STRONG SHOW OF PS STRENGTH IN STREETS IS NEEDED TO HELP TURN TIDE IN THEIR FAVOR. END SUMMARY

1. FOLLOWING ALL-NIGHT SESSION, REVOLUTIONARY COUNCIL (RC) ON JULY 12 ANNOUNCED FORMAL DISMISSAL OF SOCIALIST MINISTERS FROM COALITION GOVERNMENT. RC HAS INSTRUCTED PRIME MINISTER VASCO GONCALVES TO FILL VACANCIES IMMEDIATELY WITH "PATRIOTIC PERSONS," WHO "PUT NATIONAL INTEREST ABOVE PARTY INTERESTS." COPCON COMMANDER GENERAL OTELO SARAIVA DE CARVALHO INTERRUPTED HIS PARTICIPATION IN RC DELIBERATIONS TO VISIT UNITS IN LISBON AREA -- COMMANDOS AND RALIS. COPCON UNITS REPORTEDLY REMAIN ON LOW-LEVEL ALERT.

2. PRIME MINISTER HAS CANCELLED SCHEDULED TRIP TO SAO TOME INDEPENDENCE CEREMONIES, SENDING NEW-FOUND ALLY ADMIRAL ROSA COUTINHO TO REPRESENT GOVERNMENT.

3. EARLIER IN EVENING JULY 11, OTELO, ROSA COUTINHO, AND GENERAL MORAIS E SILVA APPEARED AS RC SPOKESMEN ON TELEVISED ROUND-TABLE DISCUSSION DESIGNED TO REASSURE PUBLIC. OTELO AND COUTINHO AS USUAL DID MOST OF TALKING. THEY ALTERNATED IN MIXING REVOLUTIONARY RHETORIC WITH CRITICISM OF PS, IN GENERALLY UNCONVINCING PERFORMANCE. IN DEFENSE OF COPCON INACTION IN "REPUBLICA" CASE, OTELO EXPLAINED THAT PRESS LAW HAD BEEN "OVERTAKEN" BY EVENTS. REVOLUTIONARY PROCESS HAD ITS OWN DYNAMIC, HE EXPLAINED, AND THAT DYNAMIC MUST BE RESPECTED. SPEAKING WITH HIS USUAL DIRECTNESS HE SAID THAT DIARIO DE NOTICIAS," "SECULO," AND "DIARIO DE LISBOA" ARE ALL DOMINATED BY PCP. IF THESE PAPERS HAD NOT RUN INTO SAME PROBLEMS AS "REPUBLICA" IT WAS BECAUSE WORKERS, INCLUDING TYPOGRAPHICAL WORKERS, WERE ALSO UNDER PCP INFLUENCE. ROSA COUTINHO, FOR HIS PART, DENIED THAT ANYTHING IN AFM'S POLITICAL ACTION PROGRAM VIOLATED AFM'S PACT WITH PARTIES.

4. SOCIALISTS, FOLLOWING SOARES DENUNCIATION OF AFM AND PCP AT JULY 11 PRESS CONFERENCE, CONTINUE TO PONDER NEXT LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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MOVE. SOARES CONFIDANT TOLD DCM EARLY SATURDAY MORNING THAT SOARES HAD NOT YET DECIDED ON NEXT STEP.

5. POPULAR DEMOCRATS (PPD) ALSO CONTINUE TO MOVE DELIBERATELY. PPD LEADER EMIDIO GUERREIRO MET WITH PRESIDENT COSTA GOMES AFTERNOON JULY 11 TO EXPLAIN PPD POSITION. ALTHOUGH GUERREIRO STRESSED THAT PPD WOULD MAKE ITS OWN DECISION REGARDING REMAINING IN OR LEAVING GOVERNMENT,

HE CONDITIONED THAT DECISION ON AFM RESPONSE TO SERIES OF PPD "OBSERVATIONS" ON CURRENT POLITICAL SITUATION. THEY RELATE TO PARTY CONTROL OF PRESS; CRISIS OF AUTHORITY; AND ECONOMY. GUERREIRO WILL MEET AGAIN WITH PRESIDENT JULY 16 FOR GOVERNMENT RESPONSE.

6. COMMUNISTS MEANWHILE CONTINUE TO PUSH UNITY LINE. STATEMENT ISSUED BY CENTRAL COMMITTEE JULY 11 CHARGED THAT PS ACTION WAS DIRECTED AGAINST REVOLUTIONARY PROCESS ITSELF, WITH IMMEDIATE GOAL OF ESTABLISHING NEW COALITION OF FORCES OF RIGHT.

7. OTHER DEVELOPMENTS CONTRIBUTE TO CRISIS ATMOSPHERE.
-- LARGE RALLY IN OPORTO EVENING JULY 11 SPONSORED BY INTERSINDICAL AND SUPPORTED BY COMMUNISTS AS WELL AS PARTIES ON FAR LEFT WHICH ECHOED SIMILAR LISBON RALLY JULY 11, IN SUPPORT OF AFM.
-- FIGHTING IN LUANDA;
-- ESCAPE OF MRPP SECRETARY GENERAL ARNALDO MATOS FROM HOSPITAL WHERE HE WAS UNDERGOING TREATMENT FOR GASTRIC ULCER.
-- ONE OF FEW POSITIVE ENCOURAGING NOTES FROM AFM STANDPOINT WAS END TO TAP STRIKE, ANNOUNCED JULY 11.
-- WE UNDERSTAND THAT GERMAN RADIO REPORTED ON JULY 12 THAT THE FRENCH FOREIGN MINISTER SAID THAT DEVELOPMENTS IN PORTUGAL INDICATED THAT COMMITMENTS MADE TO THE FRENCH DURING COSTA GOMES VISIT WERE NOT BEING FULFILLED. GIVEN THAT SITUATION FRENCH COULD NOT SEE HOW EC WOULD BE ABLE TO ASSIST PORTUGAL ECONOMICALLY.

8. COMMENT: RC ACTION INDICATES THAT PRIME MINISTER FOR TIME BEING AT LEAST, IS CONTINUING TO HOLD ON. RC SEEMS TO BE DIRECTED AT EXPLOITING DIFFERENCES WITHIN RANKS OF PS. OUR DISCUSSIONS WITH PS SOURCES, PLUS SOARES PUBLIC STATEMENTS, INDICATE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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THAT THIS IS LARGELY WISHFUL THINKING ON PART OF RC. SOCIALIST RANK-AND-FILE, IF ANYTHING, ARE MORE MILITANT THAN LEADERSHIP ON NEED TO ASSERT PARTY'S PREOGATIVES. POSITION PPD FINALLY ADOPTS WILL BE PSYCHOLOGICALLY IMPORTANT BUT NOT DECISIVE. WE CONTINUE TO BELIEVE THAT STRONG SOCIALIST SHOW OF STRENGTH IN STREETS WILL BE NEEDED TO HELP TURN TIDE IN THEIR FAVOR. PROBABLY EVEN STRONGER ACTION IS NECESSARY.
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